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The same reckless handling of figures, the same naïve delight in the results of these elaborate computations, and the same grave seriousness with which they are contemplated, characterizes the two authors so widely separated in years.

Just as Mr. Mulhall pursues now discarded methods, so he pursues aims and purposes which statistics have set aside. He has a childlike pleasure in rolling off large numbers. He is interested in finding out how many eggs are consumed in Great Britain. If the statistician cares for this it is for the purpose of ascertaining the average consumption. But Mr. Mulhall reverses matters, and with an assumed consumption per family reckons a total consumption, which has little interest. After all, the purpose of statistics is to ascertain average typical conditions, not totals which are meaningless. Here Mr. Mulhall discards all the progress which statistics has made in the past two centuries, and goes back to the inaccurate and unsatisfactory purposes of old writers upon political arithmetic.

If it were not for the wide popular vogue of Mr. Mulhall's writings it would be useless to insist upon these things. The statistical specialist has long regarded with justifiable suspicion any statement which emanates from this writer. But untrained writers and speakers who repose an unlimited confidence in the printed page have drawn largely upon a writer who furnishes exact statements where the facts are unknown. Indeed, even the elect have at times been deceived, if we can judge from the commendations of the author's Dictionary of Statistics which are printed on page iv of the present work. It is with a view of warning those who desire to speak with authority of the preposterousness of Mr. Mulhall's statements that the present book is treated in terms which may be thought severe, but which we believe to be fully justified.

R. P. F.

NEW YORK BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL STATISTICS.

The following sections of the new charter of the City of New York provide for the establishment of a Bureau of Municipal Statistics. (Chapter 378, Laws of 1897.)

Bureau of municipal statistics.

SEC. 128. There shall be a bureau of municipal statistics of the city of New York for the purpose of collecting, keeping, and publish-

ing, as hereinafter or otherwise provided by law, such statistical data relating to the city as shall be deemed of utility or interest to the city government or its citizens.

Bureau ; how constituted.

SEC. 129. The bureau of municipal statistics shall consist of a chief of the bureau of municipal statistics, of a municipal statistical commission, and of such assistants to the chief of the bureau as may be found necessary for properly carrying on the work of the bureau.

Chief of bureau to be appointed by the mayor.

SEC. 130. The chief of the bureau of municipal statistics shall be appointed by the mayor for a term of four years, and shall, unless sooner removed, hold office until his successor shall be appointed and has duly qualified. He shall be *ex officio* a member and the chairman of the municipal statistical commission.

Municipal statistical commission ; how constituted.

SEC. 131. The municipal statistical commission shall consist of not less than three nor more than six members, exclusive of the chief of the bureau of municipal statistics. Such members shall be appointed by the mayor and shall be residents of the city. They shall be appointed with special reference to their qualifications to give expert advice upon statistical subjects. Their term of office shall be six years ; but the members of the commission first appointed shall by lot divide themselves into three classes, so that one-third shall retire at the end of two years, one-third at the end of four years, and one-third at the end of six years. The successors to such original commissioners shall be appointed for the term of six years.

Meetings of commission ; quorum.

SEC. 132. The municipal statistical commission shall meet at such times as may be convenient, but at least once in each month. A majority of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Place of meeting.

SEC. 133. It shall be the duty of the board of estimate and apportionment to provide suitable offices, furniture, and appliances for the use of the bureau of municipal statistics.

Compensation of chief of bureau and his assistants, and of the commission.

SEC. 134. The chief of the bureau of municipal statistics shall receive an annual salary of \$3500. He shall appoint his assistants, and shall fix their salaries with the approval of the board of estimate and apportionment. The members of the municipal statistical commission shall receive no compensation.

Powers and duties of the commission.

SEC. 135. The municipal statistical commission shall make such rules and by-laws as may be necessary for the regulation of the bureau of municipal statistics not in conflict with this act, or with any law of this State or of the United States, and shall direct the general work of the bureau of municipal statistics. The commission shall devise and carry out plans for the collection and publication by the bureau of municipal statistics of such statistical data relating to the city of New York as it may deem advisable to publish. The head of each department of the city shall, upon a request from the commission made through the mayor, and approved by him, transmit to the chief of the bureau of municipal statistics for use by the commission, upon such blanks as may be provided, or in such other manner as may be deemed convenient by the commission, such statistical data relating to the work of such department as the commission may call for.

Powers and duties of chief of bureau.

SEC. 136. The chief of the bureau of municipal statistics shall have charge of the execution of the plans outlined by the statistical commission, and shall, under the direction of the commission, attend to the collection, tabulation, and publication of reports directed to be published by the commission.

Publication of statistics.

SEC. 137. The bureau of municipal statistics shall publish annually, with the approval of the board of estimate and apportionment, a volume to be known as the "Municipal Statistics of the City of New York for the Year ——" In this volume the statistical commission shall publish, in so far as it may deem advisable, the results attending the work of the various departments of the city government for the preceding calendar year, and such other statistical information

and facts relating to the city of New York or its inhabitants as it may deem of general public interest. Such publication shall contain statistics relating to births, marriages, deaths ; to the sanitary condition of the city ; to the supervision of the water supply, parks, streets, pavements, sewers, and buildings of the city ; to the occurrence of fires ; to the administration of charities and corrections ; to the administration of the police department ; to the judiciary and its various departments and branches ; to crime ; to the business and proceedings of the criminal courts and officers of the city ; to the operation of the license laws ; to the children attending school and to the public schools, to the work of the department of education, and to the population of the city of school age ; to franchises granted to corporations, and whether they shall have been put in use or not ; to municipal revenues and expenditures ; to the administration of the various city departments having charge of the expenditure of city moneys ; to the administration of the tax department, and to the wealth and indebtedness of the city ; and also a general statement of the legislative enactments relating to the government of the city of New York.

Limitation of expense of maintaining the bureau of municipal statistics.

SEC. 138. The expenses of such publications, and all other expenses of the bureau of municipal statistics, shall be included in the annual budget. The total expense of maintaining the bureau of municipal statistics, including salaries, shall not exceed in any one year the sum of ten thousand dollars, unless otherwise provided by the board of estimate and apportionment and the municipal assembly.

BOSTON DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS.

In the early part of 1897 the following ordinance was passed by the city government of Boston authorizing the establishment of a Municipal Department of Statistics : —

A department of municipal statistics is hereby established, to be in charge of a board of six members, of whom the City Engineer shall, *ex officio*, be one, and the remaining five members shall be appointed by the mayor. The members of said board may be appointed by the